

## Patients with Special Needs look to clinic for assistance

Transforming Lives... Providing hope... Making a difference - one patient at a time. It is not always easy and the challenges are many, but this is exactly what our *Manos Amigas* medical clinic in Honduras attempts to do on a daily basis. We can't promise miracles, but they seem to happen here. Our clinic has helped the lame to walk, provided nutrients to the malnourished, the gift of sound to the hearing impaired and accommodated special testing for those too poor or unaware of what more could be done for them if they simply had the means to seek it out for themselves. There are life altering stories behind some of the activities taking place at the clinic that we would like to share with you.

Meet a few of our patients...

Guiellermo, a man searching for a helping hand

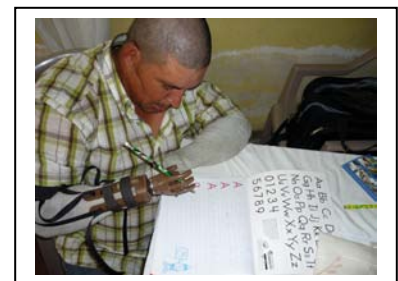


Carrying a burlap sack on one arm while walking past our clinic, with eyes cast downward searching for scraps of anything of value on the littered dirt street, Guiellermo suddenly looked heavenward, finding himself in front of our clinic sign that read *Manos Amigas*, Spanish for "Friendly Hands," so he came in! He said he wanted a pair of new hands...you see he had none except for a pair of discarded WWII vintage prosthetic cast-offs with non-functioning pincher hooks held together by bailing wire. He survives by scavenging and selling whatever he can manage to place in his sack each day. He has nine children that live with him on a small farm that he is not able to maintain adequately.

Tragically he lost his arms seven years ago. Robbers entered his house, wacked him in the back of the neck and across his face with a machete, and then proceeded to chop off each hand above the wrist! Truly a gruesome event, but somehow he survived. Since that time, he has struggled to provide for himself and his family. Although he has other physical limitations like a deformed foot, it does not prevent him from balancing himself or walking quickly. He is gregarious with a good sense of self, humor and a positive attitude.

Listening to his story, one of our board members took pictures and upon returning home, e-mailed a contact in California who owned a plastic company that was making prosthetic limbs for a Rotary project in other parts of the world. Soon wooden boxes, containing prosthetic hands donated by benefactors started arriving at our headquarters so that we could start a program in Honduras. What a God send! But first we had to attend training sessions on how to service and fit the apparatus on patients. That was the easy part!

Once attached, the prosthetic, equipped with moveable digits enables the recipient to grasp and carry small items. Guiellermo was outfitted with the device and he was ecstatic! Surprisingly, he needed very little physical therapy and training in how to use his new prosthetic hand. His life was changing before our very eyes! We worked with him initially to hold a pencil, training his muscles to control crayons and to color, paint with water colors and then progressing to holding a cup, using eating utensils and working with a hand saw.



Guiellermo was particularly excited about holding a knife and being able to feed himself. He loves avocados and he was eager to rush home so that he could harvest them from his tree. Unknown to us, Guiellermo helped build houses before he lost his hands, so it was important that he could hold the saw and cut wood. He was ecstatic with his new hand and he said that he was now going to attend school in the evenings so he could retrain and get a good job. Equipped with the appropriate skills, Guiellermo's

life now holds greater promise for what could be...he still needs some help, but he is willing to take the next steps.

